

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action dated December 30, 2003, the Examiner restricted the currently-pending claims to one of four groups. Applicant herewith elects the claims of Group I, namely Claims 1-19, 29-39, and 43. The claims of all the remaining three groups are canceled, and Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the canceled claims in a divisional application in future.

Applicant notes that this restriction requirement is being imposed after a substantive Office Action (dated June 6, 2003) in which all then-pending claims were examined. In particular, each of the independent claims 1, 20, 22 and 24 that are now being restricted were then pending and examined. Since these four claims are deemed to describe four distinct inventions, the restriction requirement should have been imposed before any action on the merits.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to ensure a complete and thorough review of the currently pending claims in view of the Amendment filed on October 6, 2003. Applicant wishes to avoid piecemeal examination in future.

Should there be any questions concerning this paper, please call the undersigned at (408) 982-8200, ext. 3.

**Via Express Mail Label No.
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Respectfully submitted,


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